

Tests show coliform bacteria detected in drinking water served by:
Ashburnham Water Department, located in Ashburnham, Massachusetts

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. More than 1 sample or greater than 5 percent of our samples collected for coliform bacteria during the month of September showed the positive presence of coliform bacteria. This exceeds acceptable standards.

What should I do?

- **You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions.** However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.
- People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly may be at increased risk. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1 (800) 426-4791.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been you would have been notified immediately. Total coliform bacteria are generally not harmful themselves. *Coliforms are bacteria which are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially-harmful, bacteria may be present. Coliforms were found in more samples than allowed and this was a warning of potential problems.*

Usually, coliforms are a sign that there could be a problem with the systems source water, treatment process or distribution system (pipes or storage tanks). Whenever we detect coliform bacteria in any sample, we do follow-up testing to see if other bacteria of greater concern, such as *E. coli*, are present. **We did not find any of these bacteria in our subsequent testing.** If we had, we would have notified you immediately.

Location: Vicinity of the Gardner Hill storage tank in the southern part of town

Situation Resolved: We did not find any of these bacteria in our subsequent testing, and further testing shows that this problem has been resolved.

We are in contact with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) who is evaluating the effectiveness of the steps taken to see if any further action is required.

For more information, please contact **James Zarozinski at Ashburnham Water Department 978-827-4120**

STEPS WE ARE TAKING

Our system is taking the following corrective actions:

We are notifying our customers of the violation by providing this public notice to you as well as submitting a copy of this public notice to the Department of Environmental Protection and the local board of health. Both us and the DEP will evaluate the effectiveness of the steps taken to see if any further action is required.

{Check all that apply}

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> We are chlorinating and flushing the water system. | <input type="checkbox"/> We are increasing sampling for coliform bacteria. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> We are investigating the source of contamination. | <input type="checkbox"/> We are repairing the wellhead seal. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> We are repairing the storage tank. | <input type="checkbox"/> We are collecting repeat samples for coliform bacteria. |

☒ Other action(s): updated our sample tap at the Gardner Hill tank site and rebuilt the altitude valve.

☐ **Situation Unresolved:** We are still detecting coliform bacteria. We will inform you when our sampling shows that no bacteria are present. We anticipate resolving the problem as soon as possible.

x Situation Resolved: We did not find any of these bacteria in our subsequent testing, and further testing shows that this problem has been resolved.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information please contact:

Ashburnham Water Department at 978-827-4120